

# NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, AND PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSALIST.

DEVOTED TO THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE AND MISCELLANY OF CHASTE AND MORAL TENDENCY.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. iii, 7.

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Original.

## DEATH AND JUDGMENT.

A Sermon.

BY G. F. LE FEVRE.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after his the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Heb. ix, 27, 28.

Before we enter upon an explanation of this passage, it may be profitable to make a few remarks on the commonly received opinion of a general day of judgment, at the dissolution of this material universe. It is an idea so prevalent and strongly impressed upon the mind that there is to be a great day of judgment at the close of time, when the ascended universe shall be assembled in one vast congregated assembly, before the judgment seat of God and there stand a judicial investigation, that to dispute such a doctrine is considered as renouncing the plainest declarations of holy writ. But however contrary to popular opinion it may be to call in question this tenet, we do maintain that there is no warrant for its support in the sacred writings, and in fulfilling the apostolic injunction to "prove all things," we have diligently considered the subject and arrived at the full conviction that it is not a scripture doctrine. How the sentiment of a future general judgment came to be admitted in the Christian church is a matter easily explained. It is very certain that it originated with the heathen many centuries before Christ made his appearance on earth. It was unknown to the Jews, which is allowed by all commentators. The Old Testament is silent on this subject. If then the doctrine is a true one we must give the credit of it to the heathen, and not to Christianity. Tracing it back to heathen parentage, it is exceedingly simple to show how it became incorporated into the Christian creed. We have abundant evidence that the simple truths of Christ and his apostles were from the earliest ages of the church grossly corrupted.—The wise and learned heathen in becoming converts to Christianity naturally carried with them certain favorite and cherished opinions and incorporated them with their systems of belief. It has often been said that you may prove any thing from Scripture; but though we are unwilling to admit this, we readily concede that almost any doctrine may find support by quoting detached passages, or breaking the connexion by selecting such fragments as may suit the purpose of the theorist and thus establishing his point. You have undoubtedly heard of the wit, who wishing to prove that suicide was

lawful, proved it thus, from Scripture, "and Judas went out and hanged himself;"—"go thou and do likewise." It is by means scarcely less absurd that many important doctrines owe their origin and maintain their existence. I shall select only one instance and that immediately bearing on the subject in hand. We read in Matt. "for the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels and then he shall reward every man according to his works." To a mind on which the doctrine of Christ's coming to judgment in another state of existence, had been impressed by education, here would be a text which would appear to corroborate these views, but it only does so by standing alone, for the next verse specifies accurately the exact period when this event is to take place. "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, who shall not taste death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Now we cannot suffer these verses to be separated and still less are we disposed to countenance it, when we find the other evangelists in recording the same event, have carefully observed their connexion. We read of no other coming to judgment in the New-Testament, and hence we have good grounds to believe that no other is taught there. Another obstacle against receiving the doctrine of a general judgment at some very remote period, and to take place on some particular day, is farther found in accounting for its *design* or *object*. The questions which arise in every reflecting mind are these, of what use will it be? what purpose is it to answer? Let us briefly consider some of the prominent sentiments connected with this subject. It is taught that at death the destiny of man is fixed. While his body goes down to the grave as food for worms his spirit or soul which survives the ruin of the house it tenanted, passes to a state of ineffable bliss or inconceivable misery. Here it remains till the general day of resurrection when it once more animates the sleeping clay. Body and spirit being thus a second time united, both appear before the judgment seat of Christ. There they are judged according to the deeds done in the body, and sentence is then passed and they return either to happiness or misery as their respective character merits. We will now suppose a man, whose wicked character constituted him a fit subject for future misery to have died in the days of Adam. If you please you may take Cain as an example. He passes into a state of torment. There his soul remains till the day of the resurrection, when he is led to judgment. When will that be? We are not informed. Let us suppose it as far distant as the years that have rolled away since the days of the creation. Here then we have a man suffering for nearly twelve thousands years before his trial. Is it not something remarkable in the instance of Cain, and surely he may be considered a fair example for future transgressors, that God in passing sentence on him, confined his punishment to this life. He was to be "a fugitive and vagabond on the face of the earth." This corresponds with the declaration of Solomon, "the righteous shall be recompensed in the

earth, much more the wicked and the sinner." Here are no threatenings of future vindictive judgment in another world.

But to return immediately to our subject.—The whole view of the popular sentiment seems replete with difficulty and injustice. Let us endeavor to bring it home to ourselves, we inquire again what is the object of this judgment.—Answer—to pass sentence on the transgressor and reward him according to his work? But we should think that this had been already done, seeing that from the moment of death, he has endured twelve thousand years of torment.—This to a reasonable mind, and any heart but *one of stone*, would appear sufficient for the transgression of a few fleeting years. Here it seems judgment has been given and the sentence at least in part executed. If we are told that his ultimate condition could not be known until the day of his trial, what justice is there in keeping him in misery twelve thousand years? If, on the other hand, his destiny was sealed at the hour of his death, then we inquire, what is the use of calling him up to judgment? The *necessity* of a future day of judgment is entirely superseded. These objections, and a hundred more which might be stated, rise up in our minds and destroy our faith in a future judgment.

Those who support the common opinions, have felt the force and difficulty of these objections and have invented a variety of speculations to answer them. It has been said that this public trial is necessary for the *vindication* of God's dealings and honor and therefore the assembled universe are called to witness it. This appears to us making matters worse. Instead of God and Jesus Christ sitting in judgment on men, it would then appear that men were sitting in judgment on them. It is impossible to reconcile all these difficulties and hence the most candid, who still support them, generally conclude their observations by remarking that it will not do to reason on these matters. We must receive them because they are revealed, but they cannot be satisfactorily accounted for. Now if it should be made to appear, that no such doctrine as a general judgment was taught in the Scriptures, from how much embracement, the mind would be relieved. Would not any man of sense choose that path which was most clear of difficulties? We should think that he would.—We do not then hesitate to state our conviction that no such doctrine is taught in the sacred scriptures. We believe that *all* God's "ways are righteousness and judgment"—that he is a "God who judgeth in the earth," and hence he has not fixed any particular and specified period to recompense the righteous and the wicked. The discussion of all those passages by which it is *supposed* this doctrine is established would exceed our limits, and we shall therefore confine ourselves to the examination of the text, which is supposed as the strongest in favor of common opinions.

There are a few important observations which we must premise in reference to the text. It is worthy of especial notice that this is the

only text in the Bible in which a judgment after death is definitely stated. We read much in the gospel of Christ coming to judgment, but it is always referred to the generation of that day and during the life time of some of his bearers, but not one word of its being in another world or another state of being. This cannot fail of striking the mind of every considerate man with peculiar force. A doctrine involving such momentous consequences might be considered as worthy of a very prominent place in the sacred oracles.

Another remark which we make before an investigation of the text is this:—while the death is spoken of as common to all, there is no intimation given that there will be any distinction in the judgment rendered. It may preach a judgment of universal condemnation: and the authority of Paul may be quoted;—“by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” On the other hand the judgment rendered may be the *acquittal* of the whole human family; and Paul be again quoted for that purpose;—“by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” You see that nothing satisfactory or definite is to be gained by the mere repetition of the words. It will not do to say that the death spoken of in the text is common to all, but that a different kind of judgment will be rendered. This must be proved. It will therefore become us to look carefully and closely to the context, and endeavor, if possible to ascertain the ideas which the apostle had in mind in writing this passage.

The epistle to the Hebrews was of course addressed to the Jews. Dr. Adam Clarke in his excellent commentary on the new Testament has this judicious remark; “that it was written to the Jews naturally such, the whole structure of the epistle proves. Had it been written to the Gentiles not one in ten thousand of them could have comprehended the argument, because unacquainted with the Jewish system, the knowledge of which the writer of this epistle every where supposes.” To understand then the argument of this epistle, we must inform ourselves of the Jewish customs and their religious worship. The *object* of the whole of this epistle is to show the resemblance yet superiority of Christ, his gospel, his priesthood, and his sacrifice, over Moses, the law, the priesthood of Aaron, and the various sacrifices instituted under the Mosaic ritual. Keeping these acknowledged facts in view, we shall find but little difficulty in understanding the full import of the text.

As the Apostle was addressing his Jewish brethren and desirous to prove to them that Christ was the true Messiah shadowed forth in the ceremonial law, he very judiciously avails himself of their knowledge of these things, to lead their minds to a contemplation of Christ and his ministry of reconciliation. In the context you will discover that he institutes a parallel between the high priest under the law, and the great High-priest of our profession and he continues this comparison by contrasting the holy place under the Levitical priesthood and the holy place even heaven itself, into which Jesus our forerunner has entered for us. Let me now direct your attention to the 23d verse of this chapter, “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens, should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” It is important to understand our Author. He shews that the holy place under the law was only a *pattern* of heavenly things and therefore suitable sacrifices were appointed for purification, but the thing itself demanded a better sacrifice than the legal appointments under the Jewish ritual. He then in the very next verse points to the great High-Priest, “for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with

hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Here again the Apostle represents the holy place under the law into which the High Priest entered, as figures of the true and heaven itself into which Jesus entered for us, as the holy place represented by those figures. The apostle then continues “nor yet that he should offer himself often as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” There are several things in these two verses which will claim particular attention. The high-priest *once* a year offered the annual sacrifice, but Christ *once for all* in the end of the world offered himself. The expression “in the end of the world,” will invite especial notice. You will immediately perceive that the “end of the world” cannot refer to the material universe, because it has not yet come to an end. What then is the meaning of this phrase? It is evidently the end of the *age, covenant, or dispensation*. It was at the close of the Jewish age or dispensation that Christ was offered for the sin of the world. And I would wish you carefully to treasure up in your memory, that in every place in the scripture where the coming of Christ to judgment at “the end of the world” is mentioned, it is the very same word which literally translated signifies “age or dispensation.” When therefore you read in the twenty fourth of Matthew that grand and awful account of the “signs of Christ’s coming, and of the end of the world,” you will recollect that it applied to the end of the Jewish age and dispensation and you will find that “that generation did not pass away till all these things were fulfilled.”

You will now be pleased to notice carefully, that in order for the High-Priest to represent the death and resurrection of Jesus, he must first offer a sacrifice for himself, so that with this blood he might enter the holy place. He figuratively died when his sacrifice was slain and his entry into the holy place represented him as risen from the dead. Thus he represented Jesus, who should actually die and rise again.—Our subject thus explained, we come to the text “and as it is appointed unto men, once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

We now propose a very important question, what men had the apostle in view when he said, “and as it is appointed unto men once to die,” we answer *unhesitatingly*, that it was the men the high-priest of whom he had been speaking in the previous verses; and we will now state our reasons for this belief. In the first place, if the passage had been correctly translated it would have read, “and as it is appointed unto the men,” which is definite and refers to some persons of whom he had made mention. If you do not understand the original, I request you to consult those who do and they will tell you that this criticism is correct. In the second place if we make the death to refer to all mankind, the assertion is not true, for Christ was not offered in the same manner as all men die, and the text explicitly declares, that AS it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, SO was Christ once offered, &c.” Will any one contend that there is any affinity between the death of mankind and the offering of Christ? Certainly not, and to give it such a construction is not only doing violence to the whole of the Apostles reasoning, but is making absolute nonsense of the passage. I now submit a paraphrase of the passage—“And in the same manner in which it was appointed for these men

once annually to die in their sacrifices, and after this the judgment, so in like manner was Christ once for all offered to bear the sins of many and to them who look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

In closing this exposition I will quote the language of a venerable brother on the subject of the judgment. “In order to illustrate and make our subject still plainer, we will endeavor to show the true meaning of the word judgment in our text, by referring to its use in Exodus 28, where it is used on the same subject. In Aaron’s breast-plate were twelve manner of precious stones, in these stones were engraved the name of the twelve tribes. On each shoulder he had an onyx stone. On these likewise were engraved the names of the twelve tribes; six on one, and six on the other. On a plate of pure gold which he wore on his mitre, was engraved “HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” In the hem of his garment or robe around about, were interspersed golden-bells and pomegranates; so that when he went out into the holy place, and when he came out the sound of the golden bells were heard, by which the people knew that their high priest lived before the Lord, the breast plate which contained the names of the twelve tribes is called, “the breastplate of judgment.”—And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.—And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and Thummim, i. e. light and perfection, and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.” Can there be a reasonable doubt entertained that the word judgment in our text means the same as in the passage quoted? And is it not evident that this word means holiness, light and perfection? As the anti-type of the High Priest and his functions, Jesus, having by his cross broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, entered the holy place, which is heaven itself, bearing the whole human family on his shoulders and on his heart; and presented them HOLINESS TO THE LORD, in himself, who is the Lord our righteousness. And thus he bears the judgment, the justification, the light, and perfection of all men before his father continually. Now unto them that look for him by faith he appears without sin unto salvation, they behold in him the whole human family, glowing in the light and perfection of divine holiness. They hear the joyful sound of the gospel, on earth peace, good will towards men, answering to the sound of the golden bells in the hem of the high priests robe; and the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness and faith answer to the pomegranates interspersed among the golden bells.”

In conclusion we only ask that our expositions of scripture should be candidly examined and if erroneous that the error should be pointed out. And we request no more consideration for our opinions than what is consistent with scripture teachings. If they harmonize with the divine record, let them be fearlessly and faithfully proclaimed, if they do not let their fallacy be exposed, but let not the community suppose that we are so pusillanimous as to withhold our views for fear of being accounted “heretics.”

May the Lord illumine our minds and purify our hearts by the word of his truth. AMEN.

Original.

#### THE CONTRAST.—No. 2

We are often astonished at the difference of signification which the word “hell” now has, from what it did in ancient times; and strange as it may appear, this modern definition is giv-

en by those who fully believe that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God."

If there be a new and better meaning to the word "hell," from that which the prophets and inspired men attached to it, when did the Almighty sanction this alteration? and under what circumstances, and in what age did this new meaning originate? Ask most Christians what is to be understood by the term hell in the Old Testament, and we receive for answer, "it means the abode of condemned spirits, the place of torment in the nether and unseen world." We conceive that this signification is widely different from that which the inspired writers intended to convey.

Jahn, (an orthodox and respectable writer,) says in his "Archeology," p. 398, "We have not authority decidedly to say, that any other motives were held out to the ancient Hebrews to pursue the good, and to avoid the evil, than those which were derived from the rewards and punishments of this life." That these were the motives (says he,) which were presented to their minds in order to influence them to pursue a right course of conduct, is *expressly asserted* in Isa. xxvi, 9, 10, and may be learned also from the imprecations which are met with in many parts of the Old Testament." Dr. Campbell, (an equally respectable writer and a believer in the doctrine of endless misery,) says in his "Preliminary Dissertations," "that the word *hell* ought never to be used in the sense in which it is now used by Christians," that is, if we understand the Dr., it ought not to be used as signifying the place of future eternal torment, the region of the damned, the receptacle of the "finally impenitent," &c. Other authorities of great credibility might be quoted to establish this point, but these show that modern Christians have very different notions about *hell* from the ancient Hebrews. These two learned divines entertain the same opinions concerning "*hell*" as used in the Old Testament, that Universalists do, and which they have always endeavored to make plain to their opposing brethren. These two gigantic theologians hold the opinion with us, that when the word "*hell*" was mentioned by the sacred writers, it was not used as a threatening of a calamity which was to take place in another state of existence; yet for this very opinion we have been branded with the name of *infidel*, and have been menaced with the fires of persecution, formally tried, excommunicated, and adjudged worthy of "the second death."

It is safe to conclude then, that there is no passage in the Old Testament in which the word "*hell*" occurs which teaches the common opinion of endless misery in an "eternal hell." If it be said, (as it has frequently been,) that we deny a hell, and tear from this wicked depraved world all restraint to crime, that we say "eat drink and be merry," hell is a fable and a bugbear; we reply that Dr. Jahn and Dr. Campbell are with us so far as this word is concerned, and its signification in the Old Testament. Besides, this restraint to crime (so called) was withheld by Deity for 4000 years, during which time no "other motives were held out to pursue the good and to avoid the evil, than those which were derived from the rewards and punishments of this life." Now we ask seriously on what authority it is asserted that "*hell*" is a place of endless punishment in the future world? Moses did not use it in this sense, David did not, nor did any of the prophets. We are charged with altering and mutilating the scriptures, "perverting scripture by scripture," &c. yet we positively affirm that what Jehovah designed to signify by the term "*hell*" in the days of these worthies, He designs to teach now. When it is said, "The wicked shall be turned into *hell*," what did it mean when it was spoken? David himself answers— "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest

*hell*." Jahn and Campbell answer, it did not mean a place of endless misery. Then it does not mean such a place *now*. When it is said, "Though they dig into *hell*, thence shall my hand take them," Amos, ix, 2, who can suppose that the prophet intended to say that the people spoken of were to take refuge by digging into a place of eternal torments? Other examples might be given, but these are sufficient to show that the meaning of "*hell*" in the Old Testament, is the grave, the invisible or underworld, the region of the dead, &c. and "ought never to be used in the sense now understood by Christians."

It cannot be shown, we repeat, that the word *hell* was ever used in the Old Testament to denote the place of "endless pains." And here is the CONTRAST; Universalists attach the same significance to the word "*hell*" which the writers who used it did, while their opponents (many of them,) give a "strained unnatural" meaning to the word. We may be told that the doctrine of an "eternal hell" is very clearly taught in the New-Testament, to which declaration we propose to attend in our next number. B. B. H.

#### UNIVERSALISTS NOT INFIDELS.

We do exceedingly regret the hábit into which our orthodox brethren, more particularly their preachers and editors, have fallen, of representing Universalists as Infidels, Deists, and Atheists. We are perfectly willing to confess, that by so doing they have excited no very agreeable emotions in us. We can bear scorn, and reproach and coldness without murmuring, for we are used to these things, and we know that our master himself bore them patiently when on earth. But we cannot consent to have our sentiments branded with the name of Atheism or Infidelity without repelling the charge, that the public may not be deceived, and that we may not suffer the imputation of holding sentiments which we do most explicitly disavow. Universalists sincerely believe themselves to be Christians, whether they are so or not. They think they believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and in the consequent resurrection of all mankind from corruption to incorruption, from dishonor to glory, from weakness to power, from a natural body to a spiritual body. They love the character of Jesus Christ, and delight to contemplate his bright examples of piety, benevolence, meekness, humility and submission. While they have no desire to boast of any good they do, they certainly delight in imitating their divine Master, and regret most deeply that they have not been able to do better in this respect than they have done. Like the rest of the world they are sinners; they struggle with temptation, and are not unfrequently overcome of evil. The purest pleasures they feel they derive from their doctrine. It shews them a God they can love, and in whom they place the utmost confidence. It shews them a Saviour, "who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time," and "who shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." It points them to a state of immortal glory, which they contemplate as a state of purity and bliss, and their views of which are expressed, with the utmost simplicity and beauty, in the following lines of Doddridge:

"No more fatigue, no more distress,  
Nor sin, nor death, shall reach the place,  
Nor groans shall mingle with the songs,  
Which warble from immortals' tongues.

No rude alarms, no raging foes,  
To interrupt the long repose,  
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,  
To veil the bright eternal noon."

These are the sentiments of Universalists, these are their joys; and they often congratulate themselves, whether the doctrine they believe is true or false, that they derive great satisfaction from it, a satisfaction they would not

consent to exchange for any earthly good. In times of sickness these views are peculiarly precious. When the mind gives up the hopes of life, the unutterable joys their sentiments afford, can be conceived only by those who have felt them. When they are called to bury their children and friends (events under which it appears to them they must sink, if they believed the doctrine of endless misery) they mourn it is true, not on account of the departed, but for the loss they have sustained; and a calm resignation is blended with the transporting thought that those they loved have gone to God. While they know that their sentiments are truly beneficial in adversity, they realize that they are no less salutary in prosperity. The gratitude these sentiments excite hallows every pleasure. It is one of their greatest virtues to excite benevolence, and make man feel the sufferings of his fellow man. Good works follow necessarily, such as almsgiving, forbearance, tenderness in regard to the characters of mankind, charitable constructions of their character and motives, and in a word, all acts that bear the stamp of kindness.

That Universalists are better than other people we have no desire to say; we are sorry we cannot say it; but the only reason why they are not, is because they do not put their opinions sufficiently into practice. We exhort them, we do most earnestly entreat them, old and young, to mingle their doctrine with every concern of life, and act according to its natural influences.

With these views and feelings, is it not reasonable that we should deeply regret to be represented as Infidels, Deists and Atheists? Is Universalism Infidelity? Is Universalism Deism? Is Universalism Atheism? Christ, then, is Belial, and he that believeth is an infidel. No, it is not so. Universalism is Christianity in its purity—it is Christianity in its angelic form.

Universalism is *not* Infidelity; and whatever our opponents may say; Universalists *know* it is not. If our brethren of other faith, wish to know what Universalism is, we will give it them in the language of scripture—"Who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." If that be not sufficient, let them peruse the following: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ?"

#### Religious Notices.

Br. Hitchcock will preach in Newark the first Sabbath in February, (to morrow;) and the 2d Sabbath in Feb. in this city, on exchange with Br. Le Fevre who will preach at Newark. This alteration has been made for the greater convenience of the parties.

Br. F. Hitchcock will preach in Goshen, Ct. the last Sunday in February.

Br. F. Hitchcock will be in Yonkers on Wednesday evening next, and can preach on that evening if desired by the friends there.

Br. Case will preach in Trumbull, Sunday Feb. 1, morning and afternoon, and at Bridgeport in the evening, and at Stratford on Monday evening, Feb. 2.

Br. Case will preach in Saugatuck, Feb. 15th.

Br. N. Dodge will preach in Danbury the 1st Sabbath in Feb.; in Long-ridge the 2d Sabbath in Feb. and in North Salem, the 3d Sabbath in Feb.

Original.

## THE FUNERAL.

BY JOHN PERRY, PHILADELPHIA.

There is no season of the year better calculated to promote serious moral reflection, than sweet, yet melancholy autumn. Spring comes, in its brightness and its beauty, like a merry girl upon the play-ground of life, full of blushes and of joy. Its flowers come forth and bud and bloom; the trees put out their blossoms, and the birds commence their songs. Summer has its "sweet south wind," its rich and luscious fruit, its hours of voluptuous repose, and its purling streams, coursing their way in listless monotony over their pebbly beds. The heart is light then, for all around wears an inviting smile, and seems to bid us to a feast of joy. Winter, too, has its exhilarating pleasures, its hours of comfort around the social hearth! But lovely sober autumn is the time of thought, the season of reflection.—Spring has fled, its flowers have faded, and the voices of its feathered minstrels have died upon the ear, while the glories of summer are fast merging into the melancholy stillness of decay.—The leaves are robbed of their freshness, and assume the "sear and yellow" tinge which marks approaching death, and one by one, even upon the sighs of the mournful breeze, are wafted from their parent branches to return, alas! no more, forever! The air comes then in low and fitful murmurs, and seems to bear upon its breast, the solemn dirge of death—"Passing away." Fit emblem art thou, O, autumn! of the evanescence of earth-born things. It would seem as though the All-wise Disposer of events, in his Providence, had commissioned thee in thy mournful and appealing beauty, to win the minds of men from the ephemeral and vain-glorious splendors of the things of time, to meditate upon their mutability, and upon the sad and sober certainty of inevitable decay.

Occupied with these and similar reflections, I was leisurely pursuing my way homeward near the close of a Sabbath afternoon, in this lovely and enchanting season, when my attention was arrested by the approach of a funeral procession. There was nothing remarkable in the circumstance, for we meet the same sad dreary pageant daily, and still forget the lesson it conveys; yet it was congenial to my frame of mind, and accorded well with the melancholy feelings which then possessed my breast, and almost unconsciously, I mingled with the solemn train, and followed to the grave the mortal remains of one to me a stranger. There were but few mourners in the procession, and but one whose manifestations of grief appeared to indicate a close relationship—an aged matron; and she was following to his silent home in the valley, the last prop of her declining years—her only remaining son. Her's was a brief history, but 'twas a sad one, and was related to me as I went along.—She had, by the death of her husband, been thrown early upon the world, with three small children, to struggle with them, and for them, through all the dreary vicissitudes of poverty and misfortune. And she had struggled—like a fond mother she had borne up against every reverse; yet it seemed as though misery had claimed her as a special object for its malignity. One by one the children of her affection were taken from her; the youngest died first, in the rosy years of boyhood; the second, a pretty girl, ere fifteen summers had shed their blossoms on her brow, was attacked by a prevailing epidemic, and had joined her brother in the "land of spirits;" and now, her first-born, the idol of her heart—he upon whom, since all the rest were gone, the rich unbought treasures of a mother's love had been poured out in unmeasured fulness—he, for whom she had garnered up in the store-house of her heart, the brightest tokens of maternal fondness—he who had been her stay,

her comfort, the soother of her sorrows, and the support of her old age;—who had been the centre of her hopes and wishes—the subject of her prayers, whom she had idolized, almost worshiped, and who had been permitted to grow up into ripe manhood by her side, had passed away from her suddenly, almost in a moment, and left her childless, forlorn, desolate!

O! there is a grief too poignant for human utterance, too strong for pen to trace its deep intensity—a grief that dries up the fountains of the heart, and slowly and silently wastes the very life away!—a grief that forbids intrusion into its gloomy sanctuary, and to add to which, by word or deed, would display the most wanton and barbaric cruelty. 'Tis when a withering sense of utter desolation comes o'er the soul, when we feel that bitter loneliness of heart, in the knowledge that of all earth's lovely things, not one remains for us to fondle and caress; when we know that all we loved, that all we lived for, have departed to that "undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns," and that the places which knew them once, shall know them no more forever!—when we feel that all our loved ones have gone from us, and left us alone in the wide world, solitary even amidst thousands. Such was the widow's grief, and such was her situation; and the deep and lengthened sighs which burst from her agonized bosom, told far more than tears, how much her soul was bruised, and bowed beneath its accumulated weight of sorrow.

We had now arrived at the grave yard, one of those quiet and secluded places of interment, so numerous in the suburbs of our city, and which resemble a pleasure garden, rather than the depository of frail mortality. We approached the narrow house, which in a few moments received its unconscious tenant within its cold and silent walls. The officiating clergyman was a tall, spare man, of a pale and lengthened visage, and apparently between thirty and forty years of age. There was nothing in his general appearance that would serve to distinguish him from others of his profession, save that his features were marked by an unusual degree of severity, and there was, moreover, a settled gloom upon his countenance, which seemed most forcibly to indicate that he was attached to the limitarian order. He commenced the funeral service;—he spoke feelingly and eloquently of the mutable nature of the things of time, of the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death; of the unmeasured blessings of Heaven, and of the beatified joys of the saints who dwell there; he spoke of hell! Oh, how awfully he pictured that fabled abode of the damned! he dwelt with rapture on the bliss of those who were to inhabit the former, and with horror on the misery of those who were to be consigned to the never ceasing torments of the latter; he spoke of the deceased, of his habits, of his general character, which, although moral, and honest, he said, afforded no evidence of his having been religious, or that he had experienced a change of heart, and become converted to God—he had not been a member of any religious society, he had neglected church services, and although he had been affectionate and dutiful to his aged mother, and kind and obliging to his friends, still, to that mother, and those friends, he, (the clergyman) could impart no consolation in the prospect of the future, for the deceased;—he said, that he had been cut off in the midst of his sins, that he died unregenerate, without Christ; he called upon those whom he addressed, to "flee from the wrath to come;" he adjured them to seek God ere it was too late, to call for mercy ere the door was shut; he told them there was danger in delay, that in another moment they might be groaning in hell, and he concluded by emphatically referring to him whose body they had just consigned to the grave, but

whose soul, he said, was then receiving the malison of the Great Eternal, "*depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devils and his angels!*!"

The feelings of the afflicted mother, during this bitter and revolting scene, can better be conceived than described. She had loved her son with all the passionate fondness of a doting heart, her very existence had seemed almost identified with that of her child; she had lived but for him, for he was all she had; and since the Almighty in his wisdom had taken him from her, how afflicting must have been the influence of the God-dishonoring sentiments she had heard from the lips of his professed minister; with what a withering blight must his words have fallen upon the soul of that aged, childless woman!

The human heart is composed of many strings, upon which we should not play too much, too roughly—her's had been touched by no gentle hand. Complicated misfortunes had already stretched them to their very tension—it wanted but the cruel words she had just listened to, to break them all forever! And O, pity, for our nature, that one could be found to give them utterance. As the preacher concluded his harangue, a few pieces of loose earth fell heavily upon the coffin lid, and sent forth a hollow grating sound—a deep groan told that it reached a mother's heart with all its poignancy—"O God! O God! my child! my child!" burst in low and stifled accents from her trembling lips—human nature could bear no more; completely exhausted by a thousand conflicting emotions, she sunk fainting into the arms of those who supported her, and was conveyed to her desolate home a miserable, heart-broken woman.

O! how I longed to follow her, and pour the words of scripture consolation into her ear—how I longed to point her to the enduring and never-ending love of God, who is the fountain of all mercy, benevolence, and truth, who is the gracious father of our spirits, the friend and protector of the widow, and the parent of the fatherless—to the promises which he has made unto his children, that he will "finish transgression and make an end of sin"—that he will "wipe away tears from off ALL faces, and the rebuke of his people will he take away from off ALL the earth"—to the unsearchable riches of Christ—to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and "who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time"—to the words of the blessed Christ himself, that the heart-stricken mourner should be comforted—to the testimony of the beloved apostle that "as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall ALL be made alive," and that after this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a celestial home reserved for us, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" I would have pointed her to the mercy of God; to that mercy which endureth forever, which is as infinite as His own existence; to his loving kindness, which he hath promised never to take away from his children; to that immutable principle of his nature, from which, in the words of the devoted apostle, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us." Deeply sympathising with the afflicted widow, and indignant at the unfeeling conduct of the self-styled "minister of God," I returned home, seriously impressed with the scene I had just witnessed.

## A QUERY.

If God is good, kind, just, and merciful to all, only in this momentary state of existence—and is unkind, unmerciful, &c. to a part, while eternity shall endure—what propriety is there in saying "that his mercy endureth forever?"

## MESSENGER &amp; UNIVERSALIST.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1835.

## SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

At the Orchard-st. Church. Subject for next Sabbath (to-morrow) evening, Acts i, 24, 25. "And they prayed and said, Thou Lord which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen," &c.

## WHAT IS UNIVERSALISM?

We are happy in knowing that many in the present day, are disposed to ask this question:—to ask it too in the spirit of candor, and with a sincere desire to be informed of this faith which is "every where spoken against." With the Divine blessing we will briefly answer it for the satisfaction of honest inquirers. But there are two or three popular misrepresentations which it may be necessary first to notice. In doing this we shall so far state what Universalism is not.

1. Universalism is not infidelity. It is very often asserted by our enemies that Universalism is only another name for infidelity. The two words by such persons are commonly connected. Hence we hear such expressions as these, "Universalism and Infidelity"—"Universalists and other infidels." There is a great solicitude manifested by those who oppose us, to make the community believe we are connected with infidels. But the idea so industriously circulated is wholly unfounded and false. This will appear from what we are about to offer before closing this article. But,

2. Universalism is not a system which teaches that man may sin with impunity. There are frequent attempts to inculcate the notion that Universalists believe "it makes no difference what they do—God is so good he will never punish the violator of his holy law." Now let it be distinctly understood that this is a misrepresentation without the shadow of foundation.

3. Universalism does not teach that the sinner is going to heaven in his sins. How often is it said by our enemies that we believe "it is of no consequence what we do, for all will go right to heaven just as they are." This is a gross misrepresentation of our sentiments. We have never preached nor believed it, nor any thing that could in the least justify the charge. There are many other points in which we have reason to complain of being misrepresented. But we have not time to mention more. We proceed to show what Universalism is.

1. Universalism is the belief in the one true God, the Creator and Ruler of all things, and the Author of Revelation—in his almighty power and infinite wisdom, and that he "is good unto all and his tender mercies are over all his works." The Universalist considers this great and good Being not only as his Creator but also as his Father, and as such he loves and obeys him.

2. Universalism is the belief in Jesus Christ as the Son and Messiah of God. The Universalist believes that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." He believes that "the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." He believes that Christ "gave himself a ransom for all," "tasted death for every man," and that eventually "he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

3. Universalism is the belief in just rewards and punishments under the Divine government. The Universalist believes that no virtuous action can go unrewarded, and that "he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there's no respect of persons." He believes that God renders to every man according to his works.—Yet he does not believe that the inflictions of his government are vindictive; but parental and emendatory. "We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live. For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure: but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

4. Universalism is the belief in the resurrection of the dead, and subsequent life and immortality through Jesus Christ. The Universalist believes that "as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive," and that in the resurrection "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

In fine Universalism is the belief in the existence and perfections of God, in the mission of Jesus Christ, in the Holy Scriptures, in the moral and religious duties of man pre-

scribed in them, in the rewards and punishments there promised and threatened, in the doctrines there taught, and in the life and immortality brought to light through the gospel. It can therefore be readily seen how far Universalism corresponds with Infidelity. The truth is Universalists believe too much for the popular religionists of the day. If we would renounce our faith in "God who is the Savior of all men," and in Jesus Christ "who is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," we should no longer be called Infidels, and calumniated as we now are.

Errehren, let us be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, assured by him who cannot lie that "in the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

S.

## THE PATERNAL CHARACTER OF GOD.

Few principles draw more extensively upon our reverence and esteem, than that of maternal affection. There are few minds so perverted by an intercourse with a cold, calculating world, or few hearts so contaminated by vice, so callous to sympathy, that they may not be approached, and deeply affected, by that strong, that deathless love which glows in a mother's heart. Who can fathom a mother's love?

"None but a mother can express, what none but mothers feel."

We all may conceive of it, but can never measure its breadth and depth. It is with us in the very opening of our existence; it follows us from our cradle through every stage of our being, through every vicissitude of this mortal state. In sickness or in health, in prosperity or adversity, through the thorny way of vice, as well as in the peaceful, pleasant paths of virtue, a mother's love is ever over and about us, for good. No time can dim, or errors and follies of our lives, change its brightness and fervor. And how consoling the reflection, that amid all the uncertainty and change incident to earthly friendships and affections, there is one to whom we may ever flee in the hour of despondency, or trial, or suffering, and unburthen all our little cares and griefs, with a perfect consciousness that though all the world beside forsake us, with that one there will be no breach of confidence—that there we shall ever find sympathy.

To the Christian this reflection is doubly dear, for he is not only certified of the enduring nature of parental love in this imperfect state of being, but he recognizes therein a similitude, of that pure, that boundless affection and regard in the Father of all spirits, which watches over the creatures of his power with an eye that never slumbers—a love that never tires. Indeed, he holds therein a pledge, even from Jehovah himself of the ceaseless nature of His tender mercy and care. As if to put to rest every distrust of poor doubting man, he asks—and the very manner of the question shows the almost utter impossibility of the thing)—"Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" As if he had said, Do you think it possible for a mother, whose deep love and affection for her offspring will lead her through every privation and danger—to throw herself into the very jaws of death to protect her child—do you think it possible for her to forget the child of her bosom? "Yea, they may forget, (says the record,) YET WILL I NOT FORGET THEE." That is, with all the strength of maternal affection—with all the ties that entwine about a mother's heart, she is yet a weak, frail being of earth, and it is therefore possible that even the fountain of a mother's love may be dried up; but with the Father of all mercies, it is IMPOSSIBLE! His watchful care over his offspring can never cease. It must from the very nature of the case be as boundless as infinitude and as lasting as eternity itself.

We are justified, we think, in this mode of reasoning, from the manner in which the Deity has revealed himself to man—the similitude, (our earthly relationship, the care of the earthly parent over his child,) chosen by Him in which to exhibit to us His care and loving kindness over us—"What man is there of you, (says the Savior,) whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? . . . If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

The injunction of the Master also, is to address the Supreme Ruler of all, as "Our Father which art in Heaven," &c. He also enjoins it upon his followers to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you," &c. Matt. v, 44, and for

what purpose? "That ye may be the children [characteristically] of your Father which is in heaven," Matt. v, 45. And he assures us that that father's dealings are impartial—that his sunshine and showers fall alike on the evil and the good, the just and the unjust.

In the chastisements inflicted upon men, they are frequently appealed to under the same similitude—that of the earthly parent correcting his children. "As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." "We have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits, and live?" Indeed, the occasions are numerous in the sacred writings, in which we are appealed to after this same manner—as children of an all-wise parent, who knows infinitely better what is for our benefit than we ourselves, and who will do for us more abundantly than we can even ask or think; and for these very considerations, we are under the strongest obligations to yield a willing obedience to all his requirements. That love begets love, is an acknowledged principle.

If the foregoing reflections are just—(and we see not how they can well be set aside, for it appears to us they must commend themselves to the good sense and better judgment of every one who will reflect at all—that his daily experience, the tokens of kindness and mercy, which are continually showered upon him, must be "confirmation strong" of the goodness of his Heavenly parent)—if those reflections are just, what are we to think of that course of teaching in the religious world, which presents the Deity as the tyrannical and vindictive governor of the universe—as the implacable enemy of a vast portion of the children of his creation, and the ceaseless foe of all, except that the few frail, fallible, beings, who eventually find favor with him, perform some certain acts and duties, to appease his wrath! O, the deep perversity of man!

We desire not to work upon the feelings simply—we would appeal to the sober sense and judgment of the opposer. We would urge and entreat him to divest himself for a moment of the influence of creeds and confessions, of early teachings and preconceived opinions, and look up, and around him. Can he discover any indication of the malevolence of the Deity in the prospect? In the starry concave above him—in the resplendent glories of that vast luminary which traverses the heavens, with a tireless regularity, imparting its vivifying rays to the earth and all things thereto pertaining, followed by the never failing "seed time and harvest"—in the rich and varied aspect of nature, presenting him, as it were, with all things lovely to the eye or sense—in his own mysterious constitution, capable of such high, such rich, such unbounded intellectual and social enjoyments—in all this, we ask, and we ask it seriously, urgently, can he discover aught of that wrathful, vindictive spirit which he has heard attributed to the Father of all mercies, time after time, in the earthly temples of the Most High. Rather, does not revelation, nature, reason, (in his sober reflecting moments) all combine to teach him this glorious and heart-cheering sentiment, that "the Lord is (indeed) good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." How consoling the conclusion to which it leads! And where is the heart that will not respond to it, however much the head may be warped by preconceived opinions.

Why is it that men will strive against a sentiment which presents the only consistent view of God's paternal character? They are not wont to practice after this manner in the common relations of life. The child will not reason thus in regard to his earthly parent. Yet men will attach a character to their Father in Heaven which they would blush to ascribe to an earthly parent, with all his imperfections. Yea, that would belittle the most ferocious beasts of the forest. The latter with all their savage character, will never turn upon their own offspring, but struggle for them through every danger, and watch over them with untiring affection. This principle is developed by them in a thousand different ways, trifling perhaps in themselves, but no less sure in their evidence. And we have many times thought that if men would but allow the same kind and affectionate character to the Being who created those beasts, and implanted within them that quenchless regard for their offspring, which they exhibit, we should hear much less of the ceaseless out-pourings of God's wrath upon his intellectual creation, and men would be led to cleave unto the Lord for the very loveliness of his character, compared with what it is now too frequently represented to be. "We love him because he first loved us."

Need we urge farther considerations to show the paternal character of God—to exhibit his impartial and boundless mercy and grace towards the children of men? It would seem to us unnecessary. But it may be objected that men are sinful, perverse—they do not reciprocate the love of our heavenly Father—they are wilful, disobedient. True, but he is still *their Father*. Their disobedience does not destroy the relationship. The disobedience of the child does not destroy his relationship to his earthly parent. And what will be the dealings of that earthly parent with his erring child? Will he not present him every motive for obedience? Will he not exert all power that he is possessed of, to bring him back to the path of duty? Yes, we are answered, but the child *will not* return. Ah! and think you if that father was possessed of almighty power and wisdom in the choice and application of motives to his erring child, that child would eternally wander in the by-paths and mazes of iniquity? And will He who is the fountain of all wisdom, and power, and goodness, do less for the family of man?

We have already said enough perhaps on this subject, possibly more than was needed. We regard it one of importance, and one which opposers, at least, think too little of; and in closing, we observe, that if these remarks fall under the notice of one candid opposer of Universalism, we entreat him to pause moment and reflect, whether it is not possible that *he* has mistaken the character of his Heavenly Father—whether he has recognized in Him the impartial benefactor of all, as he is manifested in his word and works. Let him beware that he does not attribute to God a character that would dishonor an earthly parent.

P.

#### THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION.

To Mr. Ezra Stiles Ely.—Letter 14.

Philadelphia, Jan 22, 1835.

Dear Sir—Were I to answer one of your communications—with the sweeping declaration, that your premises are false and your deductions ridiculous, you would most probably inform me that I had disregarded the principles of controversial courtesy, and rendered myself obnoxious to the rebuke, that he who is at a loss for argument frequently resorts to the assertion that his opponent's reasoning is unworthy of attention. I verily believe that the exposition I have given of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, is the only true Biblical interpretation thereof; and on a subject of so much importance as this, it especially becomes us severally to manifest a disposition fully to investigate the evidences presented in the case. Brevity in composition will not compensate for lack of argument, nor is assertion the equivalent of proof. In replying to your letters, I have invariably proposed the examination of every point which had even the semblance of a bearing on the conjoint question in debate; and I am aware that in so doing, my communications have sometimes occupied more space than yours. If an apology be necessary, it may be found in my fervent desire thoroughly to canvass every position and argument introduced into this discussion:

You concede that on the demise of each individual of our race, "the spirit returns unto God who gave it." In view of this concession, Universalism is established beyond the reach of cavil, unless you can prove one or other of the following points: 1st. That spiritually to abide with God in his heavenly courts does not necessarily imply unmixed enjoyment; or 2d. That some of the spirits which return to God will be ejected from his sensible presence. The first point you will not attempt to establish—for it is written "In thy presence there is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore," Psalm xvi, 11; and the second is not susceptible of proof. On the contrary, it is written, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands. . . . All that the Father giveth shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John iii, 35, vi, 37. You say, indeed, "It has been, in my judgment, sufficiently evinced, that the spirit returns to God to undergo a particular and personal adjudication either to endless life or endless death"—but I have not yet seen any testimony equivalent to this declaration.—Besure you have endeavored to establish the doctrine of a future general judgment and of endless punishment—but I cannot refer to any part of our correspondence in which you have so much as attempted to prove "a particular and personal adjudication" of the spirit. Besides: in your exposition of the parable before us, you suppose that *immediately after* the death of the rich man, his spirit entered into a state of misery! In this case you intimate nothing con-

cerning "a particular and personal adjudication," nor does it appear from your paraphrase of the subject, that the spirit of either the rich man or Lazarus returned unto God who gave it.

In your remarks in relation to the destruction of *hades*, you have in some measure abandoned the views advanced in your letter of May 9th, 1834. In that letter, you consider *paradise* a department of *hades*; and consequently in whatever sense *hades* is to be destroyed, *paradise* will also cease to be. Yet in the communication before me, you speak of *paradise* as the immortal abode of the saints with God! Besides: you alledge that "place, meaning position, point or portion, in infinite space, will never be destroyed." Granted—but on the grounds hitherto assumed by you, *hades*, meaning a place or state of departed spirits, will, as such, be destroyed. It follows, then, according to your own showing, that *hades* with your supposed divisions of it into *paradise* and *ghenena*, will, as a place or state of departed spirits, be destroyed. Consequently, you must either yield the doctrine of endless punishment, or show that there is another hell of misery in "infinite space." You assume the latter position—but your correspondent respectfully awaits the proof.—I desire you to remember that the scriptural use of the word *hades* will not assist you in your attempt to establish the doctrine of endless punishment—for *hades*, as a place or state of departed spirits, is to be destroyed. And though it does not hence appear, "that there is no state of misery in which the whole complex persons of the immortal wicked ones will be equitably punished forever," neither does it follow that there is such a state of misery. I am not required to show that there is not—but you are required to show that there is, or you fail to establish your position.

In special reference to the case of the rich man I again repeat, that *hades*, however numerous its divisions may be, will cease to be as a state or place of departed spirits, according to your own showing; and the inquiry recurs, Can you conceive of endless punishment in a place that is to be destroyed? If you cannot, you must concede that the case of the rich man, even in your own view of the matter, furnishes no proof of interminable wretchedness.

Your remarks on the impropriety of disallowing the use of figurative expressions in historical relations, are in the main correct. But, in my judgment, they touch not the general principles by me advanced, in reference to the parable in discussion. I will attempt an exposition of the point in question, by noticing the illustrations by you introduced.

"Nelson's cannon breathed out flames and grape shot." Here the word *breathed* is obviously a *figurative expression*, and the historical relation is not invalidated thereby. But suppose you consider the *cannon*, the thing itself, a figure—how then? Plainly, it would follow that the "flames and grape shot" must also be understood symbolically; and in this case, the entire account would lose its historical character. Again: suppose you had been an eye-witness of the battle of the Nile, and in your account thereof you should say, "I saw Nelson afar off, and a diamond pin in his bosom." I would understand you to mean, that you really saw Nelson, and really saw the diamond pin, and that said pin was really in Nelson's bosom. This, you perceive, is a case parallel to the one in the parable before us.

You refer to Don Quixote. Suppose his battle with the wind-mill to be a historical relation of fact. In this case, would you suppose that the Don and the prover-loving Sanchi were only representatives of characters of corresponding description? Plainly not—for if you view the rencontre with the wind-mill as a real circumstance, you must concede that the Don and his valet were real personages.

And now for the application. You allow that Lazarus, and the rich man, and Abraham, were real personages, and that there was a real dialogue between the two latter. You concede that the rich man really saw Abraham afar off.—With what shadow of propriety, then, can you alledge that Abraham's bosom is a figure? Look at the language: "And seeth Abraham afar off AND Lazarus in his bosom." As distinctly as he saw the one he saw the other. He saw Abraham—he saw Lazarus—he really saw them both; and if this be the relation of facts, the rich man really saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Farther: you contend that the rich man really "lifted up his eyes," and really conversed with Abraham. In this case, every just principle of interpretation requires you to allow that the rich man's tongue was as real as were his eyes. Now if this be so, the finger of Lazarus and the bosom of Abraham must be understood in a literal sense. If, in any

account whatever, several members of the body, whether animal or spiritual, be literally spoken of, we have no right to constitute the mention of any other member symbolically. If, in speaking of Nelson's cannon literally, you mention the touch-hole, or the carriage on which the deadly weapon is carried from place to place, we are bound to understand you in the same literal sense. So if we speak literally of Abraham as a man, and then speak of the bosom of Abraham, no one is justified in giving to the latter a symbolical sense. Once granted that the bosom of Abraham is a figure, it is established that Abraham stands but as a parabolic representative; and so also of Lazarus and of the rich man. You are respectfully desired duly to weigh these considerations, and to furnish your reasons, if any you have, why the conclusions consequent of the argument should not be admitted.

You have not attempted to prove that what I term a parable is a literal relation of facts. I have stated many reasons for considering it a parable, and you have stated none for understanding it literally. You have the affirmatives of the question, and should therefore present your evidences in the case.

On comparing my exposition of the parable with your reply, you will discover many facts and illustrations to which you have given not the slightest attention. In addition thereto I present the following: On the supposition that the account of the rich man and Lazarus is a literal relation of facts, I wish to be informed of what crime the rich man was guilty? You have given him a very fair, honorable character. He was truly charitable—and charity is greater than faith or hope. His riches, sumptuous fare, and gorgeous apparel, are not mentioned as any thing worthy of condemnation. All that is said about him is, that in his life time he had received his *good things*—but that these were the fruits of unjust dealing is not so much as intimated. It is written, "The upright shall have *good things* in possession," Prov. xxviii, 10. I cannot allow you to infer that the rich man was a sinful wretch because he was damned—for this would be reasoning in a circle—it would be proving the thing to be proved, by itself.

On the other hand, what were the virtues of Lazarus? There is not a word said commendatory of his character, in the whole account. He suffered *evil things*—and it is written, "Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no *evil thing*," Eccles. viii, 5. He was covered with sores, a beggar, and in want—and the face of the record, allowing it to be a history, gives me as much authority for declaring that he was a lazy, unclean sinner, as it does you to affirm that he was a righteous man.

In the parabolic view of the subject, all these difficulties are readily solved; and however *unnatural*, *strained* and *ridiculous* my exposition may appear in your sight, it is the only interpretation of the subject which, in my judgment, can be fairly sustained by the record of the word of God.—And I am persuaded that such will yet be the conviction of my respected correspondent. Affectionately yours,

ABEL C. THOMAS.

#### WHITTEMORE'S NOTES.

We have just received an additional supply of Whittemore's Notes on the Parables. This is a very valuable work in reading and understanding the Parables, and is most fully recommended to the notice of all who feel an interest in investigating scripture truth. We could earnestly wish that opposers of Universalism would furnish themselves with it and thereby be enabled to compare the views of others on the Parables, with those they have themselves long entertained on them. This is the best and surest way to come to a correct understanding of the subject. If they have the only just views on it, this course will only tend to confirm them more fully; and if they have erroneous ones, they certainly ought to be willing and anxious to relinquish them for better. Let them candidly examine both sides, and they cannot greatly err.

As this No. may fall in the hands of many who are not acquainted with Universalism, we take this occasion of saying, that a great variety of *Universalist Books, Pamphlets, &c.* may be obtained on application at the Publishing Office No. 2 Marble Building, Chatham-Square, (foot of Bowery,) N. Y. and at 152 Chestnut-st. Philadelphia. P.

#### POCKET HYMNS.

We have just received a small supply of the new pocket edition of Streeter's Hymns. It forms a very neat little volume, and one which the wants of our denomination have for some time demanded. It is published by Thomas Whittemore, Trumpet office, 40 Cornhill, Boston, Mass. The price is 60 cts. at retail.

**UNIVERSALISM IN NEW YORK.**

We are gratified in being able to state to friends abroad, that our prospects in the city of New-York, continue highly flattering. The progress of the cause is evidently rapidly onward. Public attention is directed more and more to the subject. Opposers of the sentiment begin seriously to investigate, and feel that it is worthy of their most candid attention.

Many, it is true, yet thrust it aside with a sneer, but vast numbers are treating it quite differently. The admonition has long been rung in their ears, "Don't countenance these heretics at all—have nothing to do with them, neither read their works, or hear their preaching, or converse with them on the subject—it is a very seductive system—it will lead you into all manner of iniquity, and peril your soul's eternal well-being," &c. But notwithstanding all these efforts to chain down the mind, they have been thrown by unforeseen circumstances into our churches, or perchance have felt compelled to be present on funeral occasions, where Universalists have officiated, or have by some means come in possession of our books and papers, and have found Universalism so totally different from what it had been represented to them by their religious teachers, that they have been surprised, astonished, and are now anxiously seeking for further information on the all-absorbing subject. They afford a practical illustration of the exclamation, "What thing is this? What new doctrine is this?"—we would know more of this matter. And we rejoice much in the indications we have, that there is a spirit of inquiry abroad that will not rest satisfied till it has obtained farther information, and the knowledge of God's impartial and efficient grace to man is more generally diffused.

Many of the former active, zealous members of限界派 churches have come out from them, and are now more zealously engaged in the cause of Universalism. Councils and Committees are active in admonishing, the terrors of excommunication are held over their heads, but all to no purpose.

Br. Sawyer's church in Orchard-st. and Br. Le Fevre's in Sixth Avenue, foot of Amity-st., have both been very numerously attended through the season; in the evenings particularly, when pleasant, they are both crowded, as special Lectures are given in each Church through the winter season, on supposed objections to our doctrine.

On the whole there is much to encourage us, not only here, but in the information reaching us from every quarter of our happy country, and we pray that the prospect may continue to brighten before us, till all may participate in its joyous light.

P.

**CELESTIAL LOVE.**

*Written in adaptation to the music of "My Sister Dear," a favorite air in the Opera of Massaniello.*

Celestial Love! thy kindling glow,  
O'er the heart so sweetly stealing,  
Awakens pure and holy feeling,  
Such as ransomed spirits know.  
Thy holy spirit from above,  
Shed on us, celestial Love!

Celestial Love! thy spirit-power,  
So kindling now, shall glow forever;  
Though death the thread of life may sever,  
Thou shalt live forevermore!

The spirit-part, in worlds above,  
Lives in thee, celestial Love!

A. C. T.

Original.

**OUR BELIEF—No. 3.**

His kingdom ruleth over all. Ps. ciii, 19.

We believe that God, the sole Creator is the Governor of all things; or in other words, that he "worketh all things after the council of his own will." Eph. i, 11. We freely acknowledge our inability to explain every subject connected with the Divine economy, and assign a satisfactory reason for the existence of every thing that is permitted to exist under the wise supervision of Him whose "kingdom ruleth over all." Nevertheless we cannot reasonably doubt the fact, that He, without whose notice a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, is at the helm of affairs; and that whatever may appear dark and inscrutable to the shortsightedness of mortals, is to his all-comprehensive mind just as it ought to be. Did we believe that God were liable to

disappointment in his expectations, or failure in his plans, we could not rationally confide in him as the *immoveable "Rock of Ages."*

All Theists will readily admit that God directs the whirlwind and the storm, and controls all the operations of the natural world; but that he should "*do according to his will among the inhabitants of the earth,*" Dan. iv, 35, is something concerning which many well-meaning persons seem deplorably sceptical. The evil-doings of men cause them to "stagger through unbelief;" and they cannot conceive how the Supreme Being can be the *governor* of creatures whose conduct in life is so manifestly at variance with the requirements of the Divine law. But such persons appear to forget that God makes even "*the wrath of man to praise him,*" Ps. lxxvi, 10, and that although "*there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.*" Prov. xix, 21.

We do not pretend to affirm that our wickedness is the accomplishment of God's holy will. But we mean that *nothing is beyond his control;* and that he can and does, govern every thing in such a manner as to be conducive to the accomplishment of his own will. And does this opinion afford a salvo for the sinfulness of man? Surely not. Our sinfulness consists in the *intention* to do evil. And the fact of God's making our wickedness subservient to a good purpose, cannot in the smallest degree diminish our sinfulness!

That the whole affair relating to Joseph and his brethren was directed by the hand of God, and by him overruled for good, is a fact which I presume no believer in divine revelation will pretend to question. Now the mere act of selling Joseph to the Ishmaelites was not the fulfillment of the divine purpose. The inhuman conduct of his wicked brethren in deceiving their aged sire in order to exculpate themselves, was not the accomplishment of God's will. The exaltation of Joseph by the king of Egypt was not the execution of the plan devised by the "King eternal." Indeed no single circumstance connected with that interesting transaction was the completion of the Supreme Being's design.—But look at the sequel of the matter, and attend to the language of Joseph to his brethren; "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is in this day, to save much people alive," Gen. i, 20. Here is the accomplishment of God's will. Notwithstanding the *evil intentions* of the eleven brethren, and their exceeding sinfulness in selling the child of Jacob's old age, God superintended the whole affair in such a manner as to bring about the accomplishment of his own will. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. lxxvi, 10.

A. M.

New-London, Conn.

**THE REDEEMER'S REIGN.**

He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. 1 Cor. xv, 25.

Blessed be God for this glorious declaration! Christ shall triumph over all opposing power, and reign in the majesty and love of heaven till every vestige of opposition to its government shall be done away, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father! O, how transporting is this thought!—What mortal can realize it, in its fullness, and not be happy? Who, with the gift of reason, and blest with all the finer sympathies of the human soul—who, among the moving mass of intelligent beings that throng this footstool of the Eternal; whether they worship the idols of men, or in ignorance bow to the unknown God, or reverence the name of Mahomed, or Calvin, or Arminius—or reject all, and look upon "book revelation" as a cunningly devised fable;—who, we ask, among this extensive group, if left to reason with himself, free from creeds and pre-

judice, will not feel his soul leap for joy within him in prospect of such a glorious scene as the triumphs of the gospel, the reign of the Redeemer, presents to our eyes?

There is not one! And thank heaven for the belief that Jesus shall "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied"—that "he shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgement in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law.—For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be ALL IN ALL."

Star in the East.

**DESIGN OF CHRISTIANITY.**

How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Psalms, xxxvi, 7

The great design of christianity is to reveal the character of God to the world in that amiable and adorable light, which would command the love and obedience of his children, reconcile them to all the dispensations of his providence, and cause them to put their trust under the shadow of his wings. This was the grand design of his mission, and the great object of his preaching. For whoever possessed such exalted views of God's character, and government, entered into the gospel kingdom of 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,' by being filled with love and reverence for Him who ever had, and always will watch over him in mercy. Hence the Saviour says 'this is life eternal to know thee, the only true and living God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'—Those who saw the perfection and goodness of his character and adored him 'in the beauty of holiness' possessed eternal life. This doctrine is both scriptural, and reasonable. Mankind naturally love whatever is *lovely*, and hate whatever is hateful; and the combined terrors of the universe cannot make mankind love that, which in its nature is destitute of loveliness.

Reader, what other effect, then, can the preaching of *wrath*, and the prevailing custom of representing God as full of enmity towards mankind, have upon their hearts, than to make them hate, what is represented so hateful? And how is it possible for them, thus circumstanced, to put their trust under the shadow of his wings.

Impartialist.

\* \* \* We can furnish the back Nos. of the present volume to those now subscribing who may desire them. These will include all the Letters between Dr. E. S. Ely, and Br. Thomas, since the last resumption of the Discussion. Suchas desire it can be furnished with the 3d vol. which includes the whole of the Controversy, from the commencement.

**GREENWICH CHURCH.**

Subject for Sunday (tomorrow) evening, 1 Kings xviii, 21. "And Elisha came unto all the people and said, how long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal then follow him."

**LOMBARD-ST. CHURCH.—Philadelphia.**

To-morrow (Sunday) evening, the undersigned will state his reasons for embracing and advocating the doctrine of Universalism.

A. C. T.

**Society Meeting.**

An adjourned meeting of the 2d Universalist Society, will be held in the Lecture Room of the Orchard-st. Church, on MONDAY EVENING next, Feb. 2d, at 7 o'clock. A full attendance of all those interested in the welfare of the Society is especially desired. This is important, as measures will be considered in regard to letting, or otherwise disposing of the Pews in the Church, for the ensuing year.

**Adjourned Meeting.**

The Meeting noticed in our last to be held at the Greenwich Church on Monday Evening next, Feb. 2, is postponed to FRIDAY EVENING next, Feb. 6th, to meet at the Greenwich Church, at 7 o'clock.

**SLEEP.**

BABY—the pale stars with silver light have crowned thee,  
Beaming effulgent on thy downy nest;  
Leave thy little play—with a mother's blessing round thee,  
Sink to thy rest.

Mother—it is over; a parent's sacred fervor  
Pierces to Heaven, and thine infant is at ease;  
The dart of death has passed thee; thank its great Preserver,  
Then sleep in peace.

Father—old father—the dews are cold at even.  
Leave thine arm-chair beneath the spreading tree—  
Come to thy couch. The moon is high in Heaven.  
Come—lean on me.

Sailor afar, upon the foaming billow—  
Rocked on the surges of the restless deep—  
With a rude hammock for a seaman's pillow—  
Sailor, sailor, sleep.

Soldier—the rude earth must be thy couch of roses,  
And thy bright sabre thy only bride must be;  
Sleep till the clarion thy hasty slumber closes;  
Heaven watches thee.

Scholar—pale student—the ruddy day is breaking;  
The very stars have left thee, and thy taper fades fast;  
The hum of men is hushed, for thou alone art waking;  
Sleep, sleep at last.

Sleep not thou, oppressor! the poor man's curse is winging,  
Through the night's darkness to the throne on high.  
Sleep not; the widow's—the orphan's shriek is ringing—  
Vengeance is nigh!

Sleep not, but, while the wintry wind is roaring,  
Seek thy sad victims, and shield them from the blast;  
Let thy hearth warm them—thy treasured boards outpouring,  
Be just at last.

Christian—it is evening; thy sun is setting brightly;  
The rosy heavens welcome the servant of the Lord;  
The pearly gates rise high, as seraphim touch lightly  
Their harps of golden chord.

Around the pure glories of the Empyrean,  
Where angel footstep never yet has trod,  
Rolls the loud chorus of the eternal pean—  
Glory to God!

Which, from forth their raptured hearts, the vast creation,  
Restored from death's corruptive bonds, doth raise,  
Singing aloud in joyous exultation,

His endless praise.  
*Lady's Book.*

**THE CHURCH YARD.****T. FLINT.**

When in my travels I pass through a town, or village, which I have not seen, if I have sufficient leisure, the first place which I visit, is uniformly the church-yard. The feeling that I am a stranger, that I know not the scenery, and that it knows not me, naturally induces a sort of pensive meditation, which disposes me for that sojourn. I form certain estimates of the taste and moral feeling of the people, from the forms and devices of the slabs and monuments; and the order in which the consecrated ground is inclosed, and kept. The inscriptions, are ordinarily, in too bad a taste to claim much interest, though there are few church-yards, that cannot show some monuments, which, by their eccentric variation from the rest, mark character. All this is a matter of trifling interest, compared with the throng of remembrances and anticipations, that naturally crowd upon the spirit of a stranger in such a place. Youth with its rainbows, and its loves; mature age with its ambitious projects; old age in the midst of children, death in the natal spot, or the house of the stranger; eternity with its dim and illimitable mysteriousness; these shadowy images, with their associated thoughts, pass through the mind, and return, like the guests at an inn. While I look up towards the rolling clouds, and the sun walking his unvarying path along the firmament, how natural the reflection, that they will present the same aspect, and suggest the same reflections, that the trees will stand forth in their foliage and the hills in their verdure, to him who comes after me, when I shall have taken my place with the unconscious sleepers about me! I never fail to recollect the charming reflections in a number

of the Spectator, that treats upon a visit to Westminster Abbey, the most impressive writing of the kind, as it seems to me, in our language.

Here is the place to reflect upon the folly, if not the guilt, of human hatred and revenge, ambition and avarice, and the million peevish projects and cares, that are incessantly overclouding the sunshine of existence. What an eloquent lesson do these voiceless preachers read, upon the wisdom of most of those thoughts and solicitudes, that disturb our course through life!

The heart cannot but be made better by occasional communion with these tenants of the narrow house, where—

"Each waits the other's license to disturb  
The deep, unbroken silence."

**THE OFFSPRING OF MERCY.**

As the Almighty was about to create Man, he called the angels of his attributes, the watchers of his dominions before him. They stood in council around his invisible throne.

"Create him not," said the angel of Justice, "he will be unjust to his brethren, and the oppressor of the feeble."

"Create him not," said the angel of Peace, "he will stain the earth with human blood; the first-born of his race will slay his brother."

"Create him not," said the angel of Truth, "he will defile thy sanctuary with falsehood, altho' thou shouldest impress on his countenance thine own image, the seal of confidence."

Thus spake the angels of the attributes of Jehovah; when Mercy, the youngest and darling child of the Eternal, arose, and embracing his knees; "Create him, father," said she, "in thine own likeness, the darling of thy loving kindness. When all thy angels forsake him, I will seek and turn his faults to good. Because he is weak, I will incline his bowels to compassion and his soul to atonement. When he strays from peace, from truth, from justice, the consequences of his wanderings shall prevent him from repeating them, and shall gently lead him to amendment."

The Father of All listened to her request, and created Man, a weak faltering being, but in his waywardness the pupil of mercy, the child of ever active and ameliorating love.

Remember thine origin, O man! when thou art hard and unkind to thy brother. Mercy alone desired thy existence: Pity and love nursed thee on their bosoms.—*Von Herder.*

**A LEAF FROM NATURE.**

Have you ever noticed, my little friends, after a violent thunder-storm, that the frailest and most delicate flowers have remained unharmed by the fury of the wind and rain? No matter whether it grows wild by the way side, or was carefully placed in the gardener's bed, still it survives; though it may have bent its tender head, yet it seemed as if it were only foreknowledge in the flower, that taught it, by this means, it could better withstand the tempest, and soon after it will rise again, turning with fresh ardor to the sun, and continue to live out its 'little day,' secured by the same Protector that watches over you.

Look again at a nest of young birds; during the fiercest storm, you will find the delicate and unfledged young ones, exposed to the fierce driving of the rain and storm, still surviving the exposure. It would excite your surprise, were I to tell you the various ways in which Providence has provided every thing requisite for their preservation.

Then, once more, let us look at the beautiful order and variety of our climates, and see how every thing is exactly fitted to the growth that springs from different soils. For example, there is in Jamaica a soil that cracks into chasms and hardens under the scorching rays of the unclouded sun. But see the provisions of Providence here. He covers the parched soil, which refu-

ses to produce a spire of grass, with a kind of tree, whose leaves have the property to multiply under the fires of the sky, as others have to grow in the dew; and the more burning the sky, and the more barren the earth, the more vigorously its leaves unfold. The flock, find in its leaves a healthful and abundant pasture. It becomes a sort of fresh meadow in the air, at the period when all other meadows are withered and dead, and amidst all this barren waste, these trees conceal delicious fruit, which ripens for the food of man.

And this good being that takes care of all things in nature, is the same that feeds and clothes and sustains you with so many expressions of his goodness. Will you then refuse to love and serve Him, since this is all he requires for his goodness?—*Juvenile Repository.*

**TRUTH—An Extract.**

Truth, is the glory of time, and the daughter of eternity; a title of the highest grace, and a note of divine nature; she is the life of religion, the light of love, the grace of wit, and the crown of wisdom; she is the beauty of valor, the brightness of honor, the blessing of reason, and the joy of faith; her truth is pure gold, her time right precious, her word is most glorious; her essence is in God, and her dwelling with his servants; her will in his wisdom, and her work to his glory; she is honored in love, and graced in constancy; in patience admired, and in charity beloved; she is the angel's worship, the virgin's fame, the saint's bliss, and the martyr's crown; she is the king's greatness, and his council's goodness; his subject's peace, and his kingdom's praise; her heart never faints, her tongue never trips, her hand never faints, and her faith never fears; her church is without schism, her city without fraud, her court without vanity, and her kingdom without villany. In fine, so infinite is her excellence in the construction of all sense; that I will thus only conclude in the wonder of her worth, she is the nature of perfection in the perfection of nature, where God in Christ shews the glory of Christianity.

**WOMAN.**

Adam was first formed, then Eve, and she was made of the man, and for the man; all which are urged as reasons for the humility, modesty, silence, and submissiveness of that sex in general, and particularly the subjection and reverence which wives owe to their husbands. Yet man being made last of the creation, as the best and most excellent of all, Eve's being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honor upon that sex, as the glory of the man. If man is the head, she is the crown; a crown to her husband, the crown of the visible creation. The man was dust refined, but the woman was dust double refined, one remove farther from the earth.

Woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to top him; nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him; but out of his side to be equal with him; under his arm to be protected; and near his heart to be beloved.—*Henry's Commentary.*

**Universalist Books.**

A general assortment of BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, &c., treating of the doctrine of Universal Salvation from sin—the final restoration of all men to holiness and happiness, may be found on application at the Publishing Office of the Messenger and Universalist, No. 2 Marble Building, Chatham-Square, (foot of Bowery,) N. Y. [L] Entrance in the Drug Store. Friends, and opposers of that sentiment, too, are respectfully invited to call and examine the works. Among them are a great variety of cheap Pamphlets, comprising Sermons, &c. Those unacquainted with Universalism, are especially invited to call. They will be likely to obtain more correct views of our doctrine, from our own statements of it, than from those of deeply prejudiced opposers.